

Message Text

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17

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 OMB-01 ACDA-07 SAM-01 SCCT-01

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R 191125Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3490

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L NIACY 1700

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, NG

SUBJECT: SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF KOUNTCHE REGIME

1. SPEAKING ON EVE OF APRIL 15, ANNIVERSARY OF ARMY'S ADVENT TO POWER, KOUNTCHE AGAIN CALLED FOR UNITY AND DISCIPLINE, STRESSING HARSH TREATMENT IN STORE FOR DISSIDENTS WHETHER NIGERIEN OR FOREIGN , BUT THROWING NO FURTHER LIGHT ON FATE OF NINE PLOTTERS CONDEMNED TO DEATH FOLLOWING MARCH 15 ATTEMPTED COUP.

2. SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF MILITARY REGIME, WHICH WAS ORIGINALLY TO BE HELD AT HAUSA CAPITAL OF ZINDER, WAS OBSERVED APRIL 15 WITH RESTRAINED CEREMONIES IN PRESENCE OF A MEMBER OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AT EACH OF NIGER'S SEVEN DEPARTMENTAL CAPITLAS, BY CULMINATION OF A WEEK-LONG
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NATIONAL YOUTH FESTIVAL, AND BY TROOPING OF COLORS AND

TRADITIONAL PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH IN NIAMEY. KOUNTCHE'S BROADCAST TO NATION WAS TYPICALLY AUSTERE, ALMOST ASCETIC IN TONE, PAINTING CONTRACT BETWEEN SERIOUS AND SACRED MISSION OF RECONSTRUCTION ROOTED IN NATIONAL TRADITIONS OF SPEAR-HEADED BY ARMY SINCE 1974 AND SORDIDNESS OF COUP ATTEMPT ONE MONTH AGO. PRESIDENT SAID NATIONAL SURVIVAL AT STAKE; COUP ATTEMPT SHOWED THAT RIBAL AND REGIONAL MANEUVERING HAD NOT BEEN OVERCOME. HE HIGHLIGHTED NEED FOR VIGILANCE AND HARSH REPRISALS AGAINST OPPONENTS OF HIS, ARMY'S, AND NATION'S MISSION.

3. MUCH OF SPEECH WAS WARNING AIMED AT FOREIGN RESIDENTS OF NIGER. WHILE NO COUNTRY SINGLED OUT, THERE WAS PRETTY CLEAR IMPLICATION THAT ACTIVITIES OF AFRICANS RATHER THAN EUROPEANS WERE UPPERMOST IN HIS MIND. HE TALKED OF NIGER'S PROFOUND RESPECT FOR ITS OWN KIND OF AFRICAN TRADITIONS, PROMISED NO QUARTER FOR ALIENS CONSPIRING TO PROMOTE OTHER KINDS OF REGIMES, AND MENTIONED PLOTTERSGTIMAN CHIFI AS EXAMPLE OF WHAT HE MEANT. KOUNTCHE SAID HE WAS PUTTING FOREIGNERS OF WHATEVER NATIONALITY ON NOTICE TO KEEP IN LINE. THOSE WHO DO, KOUNTCHE SAID, WOULD BE TREATED IN "BROTHERLY" WAY AND COULD CONTINUE LIVING AND WORKING IN NIGER.

4. IT WAS ANNOUNCED LATE APRIL 15, AFTER PRESIDENT'S SPEECH, THAT GOVERNMENT HAD PARDONED SEVERAL MORE FORMER POLITICIANS AND BUREAUCRATS WHO HAD BEEN IN JAIL SINCE FALL OF DIORI REGIME. DIORI HIMSELF, AS PRESIDENT HAD INDICATED EARLIER, WAS NOT RPT NOT AMONG THOSE REPRIVED. PRESIDENT GAVE NO FURTHER DETAILS OF EVENTS OF MARCH 15 OR NAMES OF THOSE SENTENCED TO DEATH OR PRISON AFTER MOST RECENT ATTEMPTED COUP. GENERAL ASSUMPTION IS THAT GON IS NOT GOIN TO MAKE OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT NAMING THOSE CONDEMNED AND THAT DEATH SENTENCES MAY ALREADY HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT. A MEMBE OF SMC TOLD US LAST WEEK THATTHE "FAMILIES" OF THOSE TO BE EXECUTED HAD BEEN INFORMED,BUT THAT NO FURTHER PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT WOULD BE MADE. EXECUTIONS WOULD TAKE PLACE PRIVATELY. MEANWHILE THERE ARE DIFFERING STORIES ABOUT IDENTITY OF THOSE SENTENCED TO DEATH. EUROPEAN MILITARY ADVISOR SAYS THAT THEGROUP OF NINE CONDEMED CROMPRIMISES FIVE NCO'S IN ADDITION TO MOUSSA BAERE, SIDI MOHAMED, AHMED MOUDDOUR, AND ISSAKA DAN KOUSSOU.

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FRENCH EMBASSY BELIEVES THE NINE ARE PROBABLY THOSE REPORTED NIAMEY 1563. DAVISON

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